

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017251

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:EGEN, MARR, JA

SUBJECT:HOLBROOKE-NAKAJIMA MEETING - 1/19/78

1. SUMMARY. HOLBROOKE THANKED NAKAJIMA FOR GOJ EFFORTS LEADING TO STRAUSS-USHIBA AGREEMENT. DANGER NOT ENTIRELY PAST, HOWEVER, AND TRADE ISSUE COULD REKINDLE IF STATISTICS SHOWED NO IMPROVEMENT IN COMING MONTHS. NAKAJIMA CAUTIONED AGAINST DRAMATIC EXPECTATIONS, BUT HOPED ENOUGH PROGRESS WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO KEEP ISSUE FROM BLOSSOMING AGAIN. HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT PROSPECT OF CARTER-FUKUDA TALKS THIS SPRING. HE URGED THAT JAPAN CONTRIBUTE MORE TO UNHCR AND SPEND MORE EFFORT ON IMPROVING IMAGE WITH US PUBLIC. END SUMMARY.

2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE RECEIVED MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR-GENERAL TOSHIJIRO NAKAJIMA AFTER-CONFIDENTIAL

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NOON JANUARY 19 FOR COURTESY CALL. FOLLOWING WERE SUBJECTS OF CONVERSATION:

(A) ECONOMIC/TRADE PROBLEM. AFTER ASKING NAKAJIMA TO CONVEY TO THOSE CONCERNED US APPRECIATION FOR EXTREMELY ARDUOUS AND POLITICALLY COURAGEOUS GOJ EFFORTS CULMINATING IN STRAUSS/USHIBA COMMUNIQUE, HOLBROOKE NOTED THAT COMMUNIQUE

HAD HELPED TO OVERCOME DANGEROUS SITUATION IN US. HE ADDED THAT DANGER WAS NOT ENTIRELY PAST AND THAT WE WOULD HAVE FURTHER PROBLEMS IF BILATERAL TRADE STATISTICS FAILED TO SHOW ANY RESULTS BY TIME OF NEXT STRAUSS-USHIBA MEETING IN OCTOBER. NAKAJIMA RESPONDED THAT HE HAD BEEN WORRIED ABOUT VOLATILITY OF JAPANESE PUBLIC OPINION CONCERNING APPEARANCE OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION ON TRADE ISSUE. HOWEVER, PUBLIC AT LARGE SYMPATHIZED WITH STIMULATORY MEASURES FOR ECONOMY IN VIEW OF CURRENT RECESSION. NAKAJIMA CAUTIONED AGAINST EXPECTING DRAMATIC RESULTS FROM COMMUNIQUE MEASURES. HOLBROOKE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WOULD BE A TIME-LAG BUT COUNTERED THAT CARTER-FUKUDA SUMMIT IN LATE SPRING WOULD AGAIN FOCUS ATTENTION ON TRADE ISSUE AND CREATED NEED FOR SOME PROGRESS, FOR INSTANCE, BY IMPROVEMENT IN JAPAN'S CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE.

(B) CARTER-FUKUDA SUMMIT. HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA WOULD MEET AGAIN IN LATE SPRING. HE NOTED THAT PRESIDENT HAD SENT PRIME MINISTER LETTER TO THIS EFFECT AND THAT WE WERE NOW TRYING TO COME UP WITH A LOCATION AND DATES. NAKAJIMA RESPONDED THAT GOJ WAS COUNTING ON HOLBROOKE'S EFFORTS.

(C) JAPAN'S IMAGE IN US. HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED OPINION THAT GOJ SHOULD MAKE A MORE VIGOROUS EFFORT TO EXPLAIN ITSELF TO US PUBLIC OPINION. HE CITED 1/19 SAFIRE COLUMN BITTERLY
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CRITICAL OF JAPAN AS EVIDENCE OF FAILURE OF US PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND JAPAN'S SITUATION. NAKAJIMA AGREED AND SAID IT WOULD ALSO BE WORTHWHILE TO APPROACH US LABOR.

(D) LABOR COST-SHARING. NAKAJIMA SAID THAT GOJ MUST NOW FACE DIET QUESTIONS ON LABOR COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENT IN DIET AND NEEDED A PERIOD OF QUIET TO DEAL WITH THIS SENSITIVE SUBJECT. HE SAID HE SAW NO WAY FOR ANY FURTHER PROGRESS IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HE CAUTIONED THAT US PRESSURE NOW CONCERNING COST-SHARING ISSUE ON HEELS OF TRADE ISSUE AND RECENT COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

(E) REFUGEES. NOTING PROBLEMS JAPAN HAD HAD WITH SENATOR INOUE OVER UNU AND REFUGEES, HOLBROOKE SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE WELL FOR GOJ TO CONSIDER RAISING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR). NAKAJIMA RESPONDED THAT JAPAN HAD CONTRIBUTED REGULARLY AND HAD RECENTLY RAISED ITS AMOUNT. CHRISTOPHER

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